The Moses Cross at Sinai
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THE MOSES CROSS AT SINAI

Kurt Weitzmann and Ihor Ševčenko

Within the Justinian basilica of St. Catherine's monastery there is, at the eastern end of the south aisle, a chapel dedicated to the Forty Martyrs of Sinai. The walls of this chapel, like those of all the other side chapels, are decorated with a few icons which attract the visitor searching for Byzantine artistic monuments. Its iconostasis dates from the end of the eighteenth century and the icons used in it are not much earlier. Because of the late date of the iconostasis, not much attention has been paid to a huge bronze cross surmounting it (fig. 1),[1] and because of the high position of the cross, it has been virtually impossible to recognize, with the naked eye, the incised inscription and pictorial decoration for what they are. Only after we were permitted, during the second campaign of the Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition to Mount Sinai in 1960, to remove the cross temporarily in order to photograph it, did it become clear that we were dealing with a remarkable and unique monument of Byzantine art.[2]

With a height of 104 cm. (excluding the additions at the top and the iron tongue at the foot which replaces an old one that had broken off) and a width of 78.5 cm., this bronze cross is easily one of the largest within the period to which we should like to assign it. With its flaring arms that end in pairs of drops it represents a cross form which is a familiar one in the sixth and seventh centuries.[3] On the underside of either crossarm one will note three rings designed to hold hangings made of pearls and jewels for purely decorative purposes, as one sees them depicted in one of the title miniatures of the Paris Gregory manuscript, grec 510.[4] In a Western cross one might expect the apocalyptic letters Alpha and Omega to have hung there on a cross-chain, but in an Eastern cross this is not very probable. A pair of spikes on the upper side of the crossarms are designed to hold candles while a third spike at the top now carries what may be either the lower segments of two small broken crosses or an object serving another function. Whether this third spike likewise was originally intended as a candleholder, or whether, from the very beginning, its purpose was to support a smaller cross or object, I am unable to say.

The main decoration on the front of the cross—the back was left blank—is a lengthy inscription which occupies the major parts of all four crossarms and is written in a beautiful monumental uncial. The two vertical bars and the left horizontal arm are inscribed

[1] It is mentioned and its inscription recorded in M. H. L. Rabino, *Le Monastère de Sainte-Catherine du Mont Sinaï* (Cairo, 1938), pp. 33 and 106, inscr. 71, but he gives as its location the James chapel which is at the end of the north aisle, corresponding to the Forty Martyrs chapel. Whether the cross was at some time in this chapel or whether Rabino's statement rests on false memory, I am unable to say. Cf. also Const. Amantos, Σιναϊτικὰ μνημεῖα ἀνέκδοτα, in: Ἑλληνικά, Παράρτημα I (1928), p. 47 and fig. 2.

[2] I wish to thank the authorities of the monastery, His Beatitude, Archbishop Porphyrios III and his secretary, the Archimandrite Gregorios, for their kindness in granting us permission to study at leisure all the artistic monuments in the monastery. During our present campaign of 1963, the cross was restudied and the iron clamp, of recent date, at its foot was removed. The monastery is now contemplating exhibiting the cross in the gallery rather than returning it to the chapel of the Forty Martyrs.

[3] J. Strzygowski, "Das Etschmiadzin-Evangeliar," *Byzantinische Denkmäler*, I (Vienna 1891), p. 120 ff. M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, I, *Metalwork*, etc. (Washington, D.C., 1962), p. 19 and pl. XVIII, No. 14.

[4] H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens Manuscrits Grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale du VI^e au XIV^e siècle*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1929), pl. XVIII.

with the passage Exodus 19: 16–18, and the remaining right arm bears the dedication of one Theodora who is commemorating a certain Proclus and Dometia, perhaps her parents. While Professor Ševčenko, a member of the Sinai Expedition, will deal with this inscription textually and palaeographically, I shall confine myself to a discussion of the engraved drawings which take up the remaining space at the top and at the very ends of the crossarms.

The top (fig. 2) is occupied by a celestial globe, designed apparently after the central pin was soldered on, because the latter does not overlap the decoration of stars. The eight points of these stars, nine in number, are tipped with sparkling pearls and resemble, thus, the stars found, among other monuments, on the ampullae of Monza.[5] Two hands of God issue from this starry heaven, the one at the left holding a tablet bearing a pattern of dots, indicating script, and the one at the right with two fingers extended, a gesture which can mean speech or blessing and in this case may actually signify both. The first hand is directed towards the figure on the left cross-arm (fig. 3), i.e. Moses ascending Mount Sinai with veiled hands to receive the tablets from the hand of the Lord, and the other is turned to the Moses on the opposite arm (fig. 4) who is bending over to loosen his sandal, a scene so well understood that the burning bush, normally required in this scene, could be omitted without detriment to the meaning.

It will be noted that the Moses loosening his sandal has placed his right foot on a hillock, although no landscape or even ground-line is indicated. By depicting Moses bending over his leg and almost touching his knee with his face, the artist has achieved the impression of great intensity of action and concentration on the significant moment of the story. In Byzantine painting, especially in book illumination, Moses loosening the sandals is depicted in a considerable variety of poses. Leaving aside a ninth-century miniature in the Vatican Cosmas Indicopleustes, cod. gr. 699, where Moses, before the burning bush and still clad as a shepherd, has already taken off his footgear—a pair of high boots, rather than sandals, placed alongside of him[6]—we find him removing his sandals in a comparatively comfortable seated position, twice in the same manuscript, in the tenth-century Vatican Bible cod. Reg. gr. 1,[7] in a forward bending position, but in a straight frontal view in the Homilies of Gregory Paris gr. 510 from 880–886,[8] and, finally, in a profile view similar to that on the cross in the Greek Octateuchs. In the twelfth-century copy in the Vatican, cod. gr. 746 (fig. 5)[9] Moses, though in mirror reversal, likewise lifts his right leg as if placing it on a hillock, but, unlike the scene in the cross, his head is raised. This is not so much a variant of the same scene, but another phase of the same episode: in the miniature, he looks up to the angel who had "appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush" (Exod. 3:2), while the Moses on the cross illustrates verse 6 of the same chapter: "And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." Though he does not actually cover his face, his intention to do so is well suggested by the exaggerated lowering of his head.

For the representation of Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law (Exod. 31:18), the differences among the various Greek manuscripts are not as great. In the same miniature of the Vatican Cosmas, Moses is moving up the mountain in a similar stride, though not quite as vigorously as on the cross, and he extends his veiled hand in order to receive, like a relic that cannot be touched, the Decalogue. Yet in contrast to the form of a marble tablet, as suggested by the text, the Moses in the Cosmas receives the law written on a closed parchment scroll, the common

[5] A. Grabar, *Ampoules de Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1958), pls. I, II, IV–VII, LI, LIII–LIV.

[6] C. Stornajolo, *Le miniature della Topografia Cristiana di Cosma Indicopleuste, Codice Vaticano greco 699* (Codices e Vaticanis selecti, X) (Milan, 1908), pl. 25.

[7] *Miniature della bibbia cod. Vat. Regin. greco 1 e del salterio cod. Vat. Palat. greco 381* (Collezione paleografica Vaticana, fasc. 1) (Milan, 1905), pls. 7 and 10.

[8] Omont, *op. cit.*, pl. XLII.

[9] K. Weitzmann, "The Psalter Vatopedi 761. Its Place in the Aristocratic Psalter Recension," in: *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, X (1947), p. 33 and fig. 18. For a parallel scene in the contemporary Smyrna Octateuch, cf. D.-C. Hesseling, *Miniatures de l'Octateuque grec de Smyrna* (Leiden, 1909), pl. 51, No. 156.

medium of writing in the Greco-Roman period. Moreover, in this miniature, as in all others we shall mention, Moses looks up to the tablets and to the hand of God that holds them, whereas on the cross Moses avoids looking up just as he does in the other scene, and in this subtle touch the artist is much closer to the meaning of the text, although the hiding of the face is not again explicitly stated. Basically not very different and all belonging to the same tradition are the parallel scenes in the Regina-Bible, the Paris Gregory[10] where, however, Moses turns his head, a feature more generally associated with the second receiving of the tablets (Exod. 34:4–5), and once more in the Octateuchs like the one in Smyrna (fig. 6).[11] In all of these instances a marble tablet is being handed to Moses.

The fervent actions of these two agile Moses figures on the cross relate them much more closely to miniature painting than to monumental art. This becomes very clear when one compares them with the great mosaic in St. Catherine's monastery which, as we believe with Sotiriou and other scholars, belongs in the period of Justinian and shows the very same two Moses scenes above the triumphal arch to the left and right of a double window.[12] In both scenes Moses is more erect and, particularly in the Receiving of the Law, he does not make any effort to climb but stands rather quietly between high rocks as if in a gorge. In agreement with the miniature in the Cosmas, but differing from the other monuments, Moses receives the law in the form of a closed scroll. Most noteworthy is the fact that both figures of Moses in the mosaic wear a beard, a rounded one in the scene of the Burning Bush and a more pointed one in the scene of the Receiving of the Law. Yet, it should not be concluded that the bearded Moses is typically Early Byzantine and that Middle Byzantine art always depicts him beardless, because the beardless type is by no means a Middle Byzantine invention but occurs likewise in the Early Byzantine period. Our own cross, whose Early Byzantine date will be argued later by myself and Professor Ševčenko, is proof to the contrary, and in support of a beardless Moses in Early Christian art the mosaics in San Vitale in Ravenna may be quoted,[13] which, though made on Italian soil, cannot be entirely disassociated from the Byzantine tradition. In spite of the fact that the Sinai mosaic and the bronze cross are preserved in the same locality, the latter is surely not dependent on the former. The design on the cross is in iconography and artistic scale much more in the tradition of miniature painting and the ultimate source may very well have been an illustrated manuscript.

This close relationship to the miniature is strengthened by the contrast with yet another representation of the Receiving of the Law in monumental art, a marble relief of about the seventh century, which was found in the fortification wall of Constantinople and is today in the Museum of Berlin.[14] Here Moses, youthful as in our cross and the Ravenna mosaic, is not ascending the mountain but stepping forward with slightly bent knees, on level ground. He receives once more a scroll as in Ravenna, not the tablets, and he receives it, with hands that are veiled not by the short ends of the mantle but by the long mantle proper. This results in a great sweep of flowing drapery, from the ankle of his foot, which he extends back, to his outstretched hands. Quite unique is the placement of another figure behind Moses, probably Aaron, who moves away in the other direction, his hand raised in a gesture of awe and astonishment. Since the Octateuchs, our closest parallels, are Constantinopolitan products although their archetype seems to have

[10] Omont, *op. cit.*, pl. XXIV.

[11] Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 34 and fig. 20. Hesseling, *op. cit.*, pl. 63, No. 201.

[12] G. Sotiriou, Τὸ μωσαϊκὸν τῆς Μεταμορφώσεως τοῦ Καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Σινᾶ, in *Atti dell' VIII Congresso di Studi Bizantini, Palermo 1951*, II (Rome, 1953), p. 246ff., pls. LXXXVII–LXXXVIII.

[13] F. W. Deichmann, *Frühchristliche Bauten und Mosaiken von Ravenna* (Baden-Baden, 1958), pls. 316–317.

[14] J. Strzygowski, "Das Berliner Moses-Relief und die Thüren von Sta. Sabina in Rom," in *Jahrb. Preuss. Kunstslg.* XIV (1893), p. 65 and fig. 1. O. Wulff, *Altchristliche und Mittelalterliche Byzantinische und Italienische Bildwerke*, Kgl. Museen Berlin, 2nd ed. (Berlin 1909), p. 19, No. 32 and fig. I wish to thank Prof. Kitzinger for having called my attention to this relief and for having made other valuable suggestions.

been Antiochian,[15] there must have existed in the capital more than one iconographical type for this Moses scene. This is not surprising in view of the fact that in most metropolitan cities, due to various influences, more than one biblical recension existed within miniature painting, and sometimes yet another iconographical tradition in monumental art. These considerations make the close connection between the designs of our cross and the miniatures of the Octateuchs all the more important.

A small but significant detail remains to be discussed. It will be noted that the Moses loosening the sandals has no nimbus, while in the other scene the nimbus is quite conspicuous. In the Sinai mosaic the Moses figures, following an older tradition, do not yet have a nimbus at all, while in the mosaics of San Vitale and in practically all later manuscripts a nimbus is customarily represented. The only parallel to our cross is in the miniatures of the Paris Gregory, cod. gr. 510, in which, in thorough agreement with our cross, Moses has none in the scene of the Burning Bush, but is given one in the Receiving of the Law. It would be quite contrary to the spirit of Byzantine art to think here, from the formalistic point of view, of an intermediary stage. What the artist obviously wanted to express is the difference in Moses before and after the beginning of his career as a prophet and chosen leader of his people. In principle, the same distinction is made by the illustrator of the Cosmas who in the first scene depicts Moses as a shepherd in a short tunic and in the second as a prophet in a long mantle; on the cross, however, the distinction is made more simply and more subtly.

Artistically, the fluent—one is tempted to use the word elegant—design of the two Moses figures is most striking. With undulating lines the artist achieves an impression of corporeality and vivid action simultaneously. The curve of Moses' back in the Loosening of the Sandals is exaggerated in order to suggest his fear of looking at the face of God. The garment, as if wet, clings to the body and overemphasizes the plasticity of the slender limbs. The same is true of the other Moses figure where the smooth surface of the foldless garment covering the upper part of the body is effectively contrasted with the folds in the cloth cascading from the hands and legs. The long, slender hands of the Lord impart the same feeling of graceful design. There is a sketchy quality in the design which seems to suggest that the artist who made the cross was either used to making pen-drawings or that he used such a drawing as his model and transformed it skillfully into the sculptural medium, like an engraver transferring a design to a copperplate.

This drawing style on metal was very popular in late classical art of the fourth and fifth centuries and does not seem to have been restricted to any particular region of the Roman Empire. One of the most frequent subjects on this group of metal works are hunting scenes like those in the Louvre, in the Museo Archeologico in Florence, and at Dumbarton Oaks.[16] Moreover, a situla in the Galleria Doria in Rome[17] and a plate in the British Museum[18] depict a scene from the Iliad, the Leading Away of Briseis, and a disk in the Villa di Papa Giulio in Rome[19] narrates in the same engraving technique the *Bacchae* of Euripides in several lively compositions. All these monuments have in common a tendency toward rounded body forms and a great fluency of contour. In this

[15] K. Weitzmann, "Die Illustration der Septuaginta," in *Münchener Jahrb. der bildenden Kunst*, III/IV (1952/53), p. 103ff.

[16] For the most recent bibliography of this group, cf. M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, I, *Metalwork*, etc. (Washington, D.C., 1962), p. 51ff., No. 58 and pl. XXXVII. A bronze situla with an engraved hunting scene, found in Bueña, Spain, is published by A. Garcia y Bellino, in *Arch. Anz.*, LVI (1941), p. 248 and figs. 41–42.

[17] H. Brunn, "Secchia di bronzo esistente nella Galleria Doria," in: *Annali dell' Istituto*, XXXII (1860), p. 494ff. K. Weitzmann, "Observations on the Milan Iliad," in *Nederlands Kunsthistorish Jaarboek*, V (1954), p. 249 and fig. 3.

[18] H. B. Walters, *Catalogue of the Bronzes, Greek, Roman and Etruscan, in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum* (London, 1899), p. 162 No. 883 and fig. 23. K. Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 255 and figs. 6a–b (here photographic reproduction).

[19] K. Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), p. 77 and pl. XL, 87.

respect they form the basis for the peculiar style of our engraved Moses scenes. However, we do not know of any precise parallel to this kind of metal sketch in Byzantine art of the sixth century. As far as the degree of preservation of corporeality is concerned, paired with an undulating design of the folds which again partly obliterates the physical reality of the body, one can point to sixth-seventh-century silver plates as relatives.[20] Although most of them are executed in a rather shallow relief, which on occasion, as in the rendering of the two horses in the seventh-century Meleager plate in Leningrad,[21] changes into an engraved linear design, the over-all effect of balance between an organically well understood body and its spirited movement on the one hand and a nervous restlessness caused by the flowing folds on the other are comparable. Works like the plate showing Athena deciding the contest over the weapons of Achilles, attributed to the sixth century,[22] and that already quoted depicting the Meleager hunt and dated in the early seventh century more or less circumscribe the time limits within which we have to search for a date of the cross. On the basis of their stamps[23] and the degree of their preservation of the classical tradition, which at that time is hardly thinkable in any other Mediterranean city than Constantinople,[24] these silver plates are generally considered today as products of the capital, and we are inclined to relate our cross also to the art of the capital. This does not necessarily mean that it was actually made there, although such a possibility can by no means be entirely excluded. Surely at no time did a foundry exist high in the mountainous desert of Sinai, and ambitious works of this kind were almost certainly gifts brought to the monastery. Since the monastery was an imperial foundation of Justinian, contact with the court, as with the metropolis on the Bosphorus in general, was surely very strong before the Moslem invasion. Yet this cross is not refined enough to have been an imperial gift. All that can be surmised is that, if not the cross itself, at least the model for its design, was Constantinopolitan in character.

The object that comes to every art historian's mind when looking at a design which has the quality of a spirited pen drawing is the well-known Utrecht-Psalter.[25] Yet when one compares our Moses scenes with the illustrations of that Carolingian manuscript of the early ninth century, a first superficial resemblance will, after a more careful examination, give way to an awareness of greater differences than similarities. In the Carolingian drawings the organic body design has developed to exaggeratedly thin proportions that obliterate the sense of physical reality to a much higher degree than do the designs on the cross, and the undulating contours are nearly dissolved by the typical nervous zigzagging of the Psalter master. The only general conclusion one can draw is that the drawing style of the Psalter, which has no preliminary steps in pre-Carolingian book illumination, is not, as is often thought, a Carolingian invention resulting from a contemporary transformation of colored models done in a rather impressionistic technique, but that in the late classical art of the empire, East and West alike, and especially in the Byzantine art of the sixth-seventh centuries, there existed a drawing style which, through various intermediary stages, may have filtered through into Carolingian art where it was then adjusted to the very original temper of the Reims artist and the essentially Western iconography.

However, what is even more unusual than the style, for which parallels may eventually be found, is the fact that two Moses scenes were placed on a cross. There can be little doubt on the basis of the iconography and the inscription that this cross was made especially for the Sinai monastery. Yet, the existence of the two Moses scenes is not so much to be understood topographically as

[20] L. Matzulewitsch, *Byzantinische Antike* (Berlin-Leipzig, 1929). E. C. Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Washington, D. C., 1961).

[21] Matzulewitsch, *op. cit.*, pl. 1; Dodd, *op. cit.*, No. 57.

[22] Matzulewitsch, *op. cit.*, pl. 35.

[23] Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 27 ff.

[24] K. Weitzmann, "Das Klassische Erbe in der Kunst Konstantinopels," *Alte und Neue Kunst*, III (1954), p. 41 ff.

[25] E. T. De Wald, *The Illustrations of the Utrecht Psalter* (Princeton, n.d.). G. R. Benson and D. T. Tselos, "New Light on the Origin of the Utrecht Psalter," *Art Bull.*, XIII (1931), p. 3 ff.

typologically. The appearance of the Lord in the burning bush and the giving of the tablets are two epiphanies which foreshadow Christ's epiphany. The cross, as such, need not refer only to the idea of Christ's Passion, but can be understood also in a wider sense as the symbol for Christ's appearance on earth in general. Seen from this point of view, the Sinai cross is a counterpart to the great mosaic in which the same two Moses scenes are likewise to be understood not only topographically but also typologically, in their juxtaposition to the Metamorphosis in the apse proper. Here the idea of the epiphany is even more specific in that the appearance of God to Moses on Mount Sinai is meant to foreshadow another revelation on a mountain, that of Christ on Mount Tabor.

Thus, the cross and the mosaic are creations in the same spirit, though artistically and formally they are not dependent on each other. We also referred before to the fact that the cross, until very recently on an eighteenth-century iconostasis, is not in its original location. Where can it originally have been placed? Obviously it is much too big for a processional cross. The same objection would apply to its use as an altar cross, aside from the fact that altar crosses, which in the Latin West were not introduced before the beginning of the eleventh century,[26] at no time became a feature in the Orthodox rite. However, a custom did exist at least in the Latin West of placing huge crosses either next to the altar, as in Old St. Peter's, where it stood to the right, or behind the altar as the Dagobert cross of the seventh century at St. Denis.[27] If any such location were at all possible for our cross, we would have to assume a position at the side of the altar, whose modern marquetry covers the old marble mensa, because a location behind it would have barred the view of the old bishop's throne.

However, a much likelier location may be suggested, namely, the top of the old iconostasis,[28] where it would have had from the very beginning the same designation it had most recently. There is evidence that the church had, at the time of Justinian, a chancel barrier in marble. In its form and structure this old marble iconostasis may very well have been a simplified version of the one executed in silver that adorned St. Sophia and is described in some detail by Paul the Silentiary (V. 682–719; 871–883).[29] In this text he mentions that along the top of the entablature there was a footway so that the lamplighter might have access to the tree-shaped chandeliers, and that in the midst of them (i.e. above the Royal Doors) there was a shining cross. Paul Friedländer, in a reconstruction drawing (fig. 7),[30] placed, therefore, a simple cross in the place thus described, and the general effect must, indeed, have been much like that of our cross in the very same position.[31] When this old marble iconostasis was replaced by the baroque one which bears the name of Maximos, a Cretan painter, and gives the year 1612 as the date of its completion, the cross was probably at that time transferred to a smaller and lower iconostasis in one of the side chapels, though it is not certain that the chapel of the Forty Martyrs of Sinai was the first to receive it. If we visualize our cross on top of the old marble iconostasis, where it would be directly under the mosaic, then its typological context would be even more strongly evident and its true Sinaitic meaning revealed.

Kurt Weitzmann

[26] J. Braun, *Das Christliche Altargerät* (Munich, 1932), p. 466ff.

[27] Braun, *ibidem*, pl. 467.

[28] I owe this suggestion to Prof. George Forsyth.

[29] P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1912), pp. 246ff., 251f.

[30] *Ibidem*, p. 288 fig. 8, p. 293.

[31] For a more recent thorough treatment of the problem of the reconstruction of the iconostasis of St. Sophia, cf. the study of Stephen G. Xydis, "The Chancel Barrier, Solea, and Ambo of Hagia Sophia," *Art Bull.*, XXIX (1947), p. 1ff.

VOTIVE INSCRIPTION BY THEODORA, CONTAINING EXODUS 19: 16—18

Provenance: unknown (Syria or Palestine?).

Present location: Sinai basilica, chapel of the Holy Fathers (Forty Martyrs) of Sinai, above the iconostasis. Soon, the cross will be moved to the picture gallery of the Monastery.

Bronze Votive Cross: upright bar 1.04 m., arms 0.79 m., thickness 0.009 m. Upper end of upright bar: two *manus Dei* issuing from the star-studded vault of Heaven; end of right arm: Moses Removing Sandals; end of left arm: Moses Receiving the Law. Candleholder on each arm; three eyelets for attaching jewels along bottom edge of each arm. Originally, tear-drop serifs at each of eight ends of cross; serif at left lower end of upright bar broken off. Inscription covers upright and most of both arms. Sequence of lines normal: 1–16 upright, upper part; 17–46 upright, lower part; 50–52 left arm; 53–55 right arm.

Letters: height 0.009–0.014 m. (lines 47–49, 0.006 m.). Interlinear spaces: upright 0.004–0.01 m., arms 0.004 to 0.015 m. Lunar C and Є ; A ; M ; Ξ ; Y. No accents or breathings. Ligatures and abbreviations: ΗΝ, ϗ, Θ̄Ν̄, Κ̄Ε̄; no instance of Ȣ.

Date: sixth century.

Bibliography: K. Amantos, Σιναϊτικὰ μνημεῖα ἀνέκδοτα [= Ἑλληνικά, Παράρτημα 1] (1928), 47, note 2 and fig. 2 (facsimile of lines 53–55); H. L. Rabino, "Le monastère de Sainte-Catherine...," *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte*, 19 (1935), 109, no. 152; *idem*, *Le monastère de Sainte-Catherine*... (Cairo, 1938) [= a second, revised edition of the preceding], pp. 33, 106, no. 71.

Documentation: Latex mold, photograph.

\+ Ἐγέν-
ετο δὲ
τῇ ἡμ-
έρᾳ τῇ
τρίτῃ
γενη-
θέντ-
ος πρ-
ὸς ὄρ-
θρον
ἐγίν-
οντ-
ο φο-
νὲ κ(αὶ)
ἀστ-
ραπὲ
καὶ
νεφ-
έλε
γνο-
φόδι-
ς ἐπ' ὄ-
ρος Σι-
να, καὶ
φονὴ
τῆς σ-
άλπιγ
γος ἤ-
χι μέ-
γα· καὶ
ἐπτοή-
θη πᾶς
ὁ λαὸς
ἐν τῖ π-
αρεμβο-
λῇ, κ(αὶ) ἐξ-
ίγαγεν
Μοῦσῆς
τὸν λα-
ὸν ἐκ τ-
ῆς παρε-
μβολῆς
εἰς τὴν σ-
υνάντι-
σιν τοῦ
θεοῦ
κ(ύρι)ε μνήσ-
θητι τῷ γρα-
ψαṇτ[ι] +
κ(αὶ) παρέστησαν ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Σινα.
τὸ δὲ Σινα ὄρος ἐκαπνίζετο ὅλον διὰ τὸ
καταβεβηκέναι τὸν θ(εὸ)ν ἐπ' αὐτὸ ἐν πυρί.

53 τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶν σοι προσφέρομεν, κ(ύρι)ε.
ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας Θεοδώρας τῆς φ(ι)λ(ο)-χρ(ίστου) καὶ ὑπὲρ
ἀναπαύσεως Πρόκλου κ(αὶ) Δομετίας, ἀμήν.

Adn. crit.: Most of the subsequent apparatus is derived from the larger Cambridge Septuagint, A. E. Brooke-N. McLean, *edd.*, *The Old Testament in Greek*, I (1917) [= Cambr. LXX] and uses the sigla of that edition. In addition, Lag = P. de Lagarde, *Librorum Veteris Testamenti canonicorum pars prior* ... (1883).

11–13 ἐγίνοντο AFMbd–hi*jlnpstv-d_2 𝔄𝔅𝔖 Cyr Spec Lag: καὶ ἐγίνοντο B **18–22** νεφέλε γνοφόδις (= νεφέλαι γνοφώδεις) blwb_2 𝔅 Cyr-ed $\frac{1}{3}$ Spec Lag: νεφέλη γνοφώδης AB **22/23** ἐπ' ὄρος htb_2: ἐπ' ὄρους AB **24/25** καὶ φονή Fackmx 𝔄$ℭ^c$𝔖 Eus Spec: φονή AB **34** ἐν Abclmo*svwzb_2 ℭ𝔏(uid)𝔖 Eus Cyr-cod Lag: ὁ ἐν B **40–42** ἐκ τῆς παρεμβολὴς] εἰς τὴν παρεμβολήν y: *om rell.* These words occur after 46 θεοῦ in all but two witnesses (y Cyr $\frac{1}{5}$) quoted in Cambr LXX. **43** τήν B^{ab}AMacdeijknoq-vxzb_2d_2 Phil-ed Cyr $\frac{1}{5}$-ed $\frac{1}{5}$: *om.* B **46** θεοῦ y Cyr $\frac{1}{5}$: θεοῦ ἐκ τῆς παρεμβολῆς *rell.* Until 1963 only a part of θ was visible in line 46; the rest (with a possible exception of one *hasta* in the line following) was covered by a clamp of later worksmanship (cf. figure 17). However, there was room for three more lines at the bottom of the upright. In September of 1963 the clamp was removed and the word θεοῦ, followed by lines 47–49, became visible. The letters of these lines were spaced so as not to be covered by the original clamp (for its traces, and the uncovered lines, cf. figure 18). This clamp proved too weak and had to be replaced by the one we removed. **50** τὸ Σινα B^{ab}M(mg) bhioqrsuvz Cyr $\frac{3}{5}$-codd $\frac{2}{5}$ Lag: Σινα B: *om.* A **51** Σινα ὄρος: *lectio singularis*; *omnes rell. aliter* ἐκαπνίζετο] -α- engraved *supra versum* **52** τὸν θεὸν ἐπ' αὐτὸ ἐν πυρί M(txt)s(txt) rell 𝔄ℭ𝔏 (uid) Phil-ed-Cyr-ed $\frac{1}{4}$ Cyp Lag: τὸν θεὸν ἐν πυρὶ ἐπ' αὐτό A: ἐπ' αὐτὸ τὸν θεὸν ἐν πυρί B: *alii aliter*.

And it came to pass on the third day; about dawn there were voices and lightnings and dark clouds on Mount Sinai, and the voice of the trumpet sounded loud, and all the people in the camp were terrified. And Moses led forth the people out of the camp to meet God, and they halted at the foot of the mount. And the whole mountain Sinai was issuing forth smoke, since God had descended upon it in fire. Thine own of thine own we offer unto Thee, O Lord. For the salvation of Theodora the Christ-loving and for the repose of Proclos and Dometia. Amen. [At the bottom of the upright:] *O Lord, remember the engraver.*

Commentary:* The cross was ordered especially for Sinai. The quotation from Exodus makes this abundantly clear.[1] This scriptural part of our inscription is interesting on two further counts. First, the inscription is a comparatively early witness for Exod. 19 : 16–18—sixth century, if our dating is correct. Second, the text transmitted by the inscription might give us some idea of the recension of the Septuagint used by the engraver.[2]

Comparison of our text with the apparatus of the larger Cambridge Septuagint reveals but one clear instance of a singular—and therefore worthless—reading. (Cf. *supra*, *adn. crit. ad lin.* 51). In two (or three) instances the reading of our inscription is shared by only one to three minuscule manuscripts (cf. *adn. crit. ad lin.* 22/23; 40–42; 46; conceivably, a group "our cross, y" can be discerned on the basis of the common

* The following abbreviations will be used henceforth: *AJA* = *American Journal of Archaeology*; *CIG* = *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*; *DACL* = *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*; Dodd, *Silver Stamps* = Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies, VII (1961); *IGLS* = L. Jalabert and R. Mouterde, *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*; *MAMA* = *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*; *PAES* = Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expedition to Syria; Ross, *Catalogue* = M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, I (1962); *SEG* = *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*.

[1] In addition to our cross, only two more inscriptions with quotations from Exodus are known to me. One of them (Exod. 3 : 6, 14–15; cf. H. L. Rabino, *Le monastère*..., 2nd ed., [1938], no. 17, p. 102) appropriately adorns the lintel of the main door to the nave of the Sinai basilica. The other inscription (Exod. 3 : 13; cf. G. Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d'Égypte* (1907), no. 790, date: 703) is from Egypt. For discussion and lists of inscriptions with biblical quotations, cf. L. Jalabert, "Citations bibliques dans l'épigraphie grecque," *DACL*, 3 (1913), 1731–1756, esp. 1738; 1740.

[2] On attempts to establish a relation between epigraphical quotations from the Bible on the one hand and the texts used by stone cutters on the other, cf. L. Jalabert, "Citations bibliques...," as in the preceding note, and *idem*, "Notes d'épigraphie chrétienne," *Recherches de science religieuse*, 1 (1910), 68–71; 2 (1911), 59–61.

variants in lines 40–42 and 46). All the other readings of our cross are represented in one or another of the large groups of manuscripts.

As for assigning the text of our versets to a recension of the Septuagint and thus—however tentatively—to a region of the Empire in which this recension is thought to have been in common use, my results are disappointing. I am not able to go beyond the observation that our inscription shows some preference for the readings of the *Alexandrinus* (=A), as against one of the two earliest uncials, the *Vaticanus* (=B; the *Sinaiticus* does not have our passage) (cf. *adn. crit. ad lin.* 11–13; 34; 43; cf. 42); of the Armenian version (=𝔄) (cf. *adn. crit. ad lin.* 11–13, 24/25, 49); of the uncial *Coislinianus* 1 (=M) (cf. *adn. crit. ad lin.* 11–13; 43; 50; 52); and of the minuscules *Marc. Gr.* 2 (=b_2), *Marc. Gr.* 3 (=y), Glasgow, Univ. BE7^{b}10 (=l), and *Coisl.* 3 (=o) (cf. *adn. crit. ad lin.* 11–13; 18–22; 22/23; 34; 43; cf. 40–42, 46). Now, A𝔄 M $b_2$ylo are said to be among the manuscripts representing the "Constantinopolitan" group in the book of Joshua. Whether the same manuscripts are "Constantinopolitan" in Exodus as well is a question that I am unable to answer. In addition to Constantinople, the Constantinopolitan recension is assigned to Asia Minor (a rather large area), and its creators are said to have made use of a text current in Palestine.[3]

Our versets follow very closely the edition of the Septuagint by Paul Anton de Lagarde, an edition purportedly representing the "Lucianic" or Syrian recension.[4] Unfortunately, for most of the Pentateuch Lagarde's text proves not to be "Lucianic" at all.[5] Among the manuscripts that have readings identical with those of our cross, several (*Laur.* 5, 1 [=t]; Zittau, A.1.1 [=d]; Athens, National Lib. 44 [=w]) reflect the Syrian or Antiochene (="Lucianic") recension. Again, the Syrian character of these manuscripts has been postulated for the book of Joshua.[6] Since we just do not know how the book of Exodus looked in the recension of Lucian of Antioch,[7] we cannot, for the time being, connect our inscription with the area "from Antioch to Constantinople" where, in St. Jerome's words,[8] this recension was prevalent about the year 400.

A few readings of the inscription agree with the Syro-Hexapla (cf. *adn. crit. ad lin.* 11–13; 24/25; 34), but this is not enough to give it a Palestinian flavor.

In short, the readings found in our two versets of Exodus do not afford sufficient indication for establishing the provenance—let alone the date—of the cross.

However, the wording of the inscription's closing part (lines 53–55) does contain clues for dating the cross into the sixth century and—very tentatively—assigning it to Syria or Palestine. These clues are: 1–2. the two votive formulae, 3. the epithet φιλόχριστος and 4. the name Dometia.

1. The formula τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶν σοι προσφέρομεν κύριε, inspired by *Paralipomena* I 29:14, has been discussed in *IGLS*, 2 (1939), no. 694 and in a learned article by Professor Downey.[9] It occurs, in a form very close to that of our text, at an important point in the liturgies of St. John Chrysostom, of St. Basil,

[3] M. L. Margolis, "Specimen of a New Edition of the Greek Joshua," *Jewish Studies in Memory of Israel Abrahams...* (1927), esp. 309–311. Cf. *idem, The Book of Joshua in Greek* (1931), explanation of the sigla.

[4] *Librorum Veteris Testamenti canonicorum pars prior...* (1883).

[5] Cf. E. Hautsch, "Der Lukiantext des Oktateuch," *Nachrichten von der Königl. Gesellschaft der Wiss. zu Göttingen*, phil.-hist. Klasse (1909), 518–543; F. Katz, "Das Problem des Urtextes der Septuaginta," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 5 (1949), esp. 20. For best general orientation, cf. Bruce M. Metzger, *Chapters in the History of New Testament Textual Criticism* (1963), chap. I: "The Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible," 1–41. I wish to thank the author for his kindness in letting me read this chapter in proof.

[6] Cf. note 3 *supra*.

[7] Recently, R. Thornhill, "Six or Seven Nations; a Pointer to the Lucianic Text in the Heptateuch...," *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 10 (1959), 233–246, suggested n (= 75 = Oxford, Univ. College 52, a. 1126), as the most likely representative of the Lucianic text for Exodus. If this is so, then our inscription does not reflect the "Syrian" recension.

[8] Preface to the translation of *Chronicles*, Migne, PL, 28, col. 1392 A.

[9] "The Inscription on a Silver Chalice from Syria in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *AJA*, 55 (1951), 351 and note 18.

and of Alexandria.[10] It is also attested in several inscriptions: on the "Tyler Chalice," now at Dumbarton Oaks, reportedly found in Riha and dating from the time of Justinian;[11] on the door lintel of a church in Il Anderīn, northern Syria, and dating from the closing years of Justinian;[12] in an abridged form on a baptismal font installed in the basilica on Mt. Nebo shortly before 597;[13] and, in a poetic transposition on an inscription mounted by Justinian somewhere in the Church of St. John of Ephesus.[14] Cedrenus quotes an inscription circumscribed upon the rim of the restored altar table of St. Sophia at Constantinople, stating that the words had been placed there at Justinian's and Theodora's behest.[15] The long text of Cedrenus may have absorbed some elements of the Middle-Byzantine period; but its opening words, **τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶν σοι προσφέρομεν,** sound both appropriate and genuine.

To these five inscriptions, I should like to add a sixth. As late as 1961, it rested in the storeroom of the Iznik (Nicaea) Museum; it had been found under a window in the right (south?) gallery (?) of the Church of St. Sophia at Iznik, at the time of the second exploratory excavation in 1955.[16] The inscription is carved on two marble medallions[17] (cf. figure 8); assuming that there had never been more than two, it reads as follows:

Medallion A	Medallion B
[---]σ̣οι	ὁ θεὸς
εὐξάμενος,	ἐπέτυχον·
εὐχαριστῶν	ἀνέθηκα,
τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶ(ν)	σοι προσήγαγον.

...*having prayed unto Thee, O God, I succeeded. In gratitude, I have dedicated; I have offered Thee Thine own from Thine own.* To judge from the form of the letters, the inscription could very well date from the sixth century; it would thus refer to the earliest parts of the Iznik basilica.[17a]

2. The formula **ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας τοῦ δεῖνα καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως τῶν δεῖνα** contains the request for the salvation (preservation) of the dedicant and the repose of his late beloved. This formula, too, has been discussed by Professor Downey, who juxtaposed it with a prayer in the liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites and even found a Monophysite ring to it.[18] However this may be, the felicitous juxtaposition brings us into the Syrian area. Most of the epigraphic evidence points in the same di-

[10] Cf. F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies, Eastern and Western*, I (1896), pp. 329, 7 and 178, 15–16. The liturgies of St. James and St. Mark offer less close parallels, cf. Brightman, *ibid.*, pp. 36, 6–7 and 133, 30–31.

[11] Text identical with the formula of our inscription. For latest description and bibliography, cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 8 and Ross, *Catalogue*, no. 9 and pl. x.

[12] ...τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σõν σοι προσφέρο ὃ θε(ὸς) διὰ τ(οῦ) ἀρχαγγέλ(ου) ὑπὲρ ἀφέσεως ἁμαρ(τιῶν) ℘ Δομετί(ου) Μαρέα = *IGLS*, 4 (1955), no. 1693; cf. Prentice, *PAES*, III B, no. 920; for the date of the church, cf. *ibidem*, II B, p. 52. *IGLS*, 4 (1955), no. 1639, from the door lintel of a house in Kerrātīn et-Tuggār (between Ḥama and Aleppo), dating perhaps from 474/475, may have employed a formula similar to ours: in the second line, the stone has κύριε τὸ [σόν ?].

[13] Σέργιος ὁ ἁγιώτ(ατος) ἐπίσκο(πος) τõ θ(ε)ῷ. τὰ σὰ σοι προσφέρο.... Cf. S. J. Saller, *The Memorial of Moses on Mount Nebo*, I (1941), 252–253; photos of inscription, *ibidem*, II (1941), pl. 47, 2 and 115, 1–2.

[14] Cf. *Anthol. Palat.* I, 95: Σοί, μάκαρ, ἐκ σέο δῶκα τάπερ πόρες ἄμμιν ἄρηΐ, and H. Grégoire, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d'Asie Mineure*, I (1922), no. 100⁵.

[15] Cedrenus, *Hist.*, I, 676, 20–677, 19 Bonn; cf. θάμβος παρέχει (677, 13) for possible implication that the inscription was in existence in his (or Scylitzes') time. Latest discussion of the inscription in C. Mango, *The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies, VIII (1962), 124. Our formula may appear in the (sixth- or seventh-century?) inscription on the window lintel in the southeast wall of the Sahibler Sultan Tekke at Afyon Karahissar (cf. *MAMA*, 4 [1933], no. 37, p. 12 and pl. 17, incorrectly read). Having inspected the stone, I read it [τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶν] σὺ προσφέρομεν δέ [σποτα. θ(εοτό) κε]βωήθι Νικολάῳ μοναχῷ κ(αὶ) τῖς χ(ριστ)οαδελφό[τη]τος αὐτοῦ.

[16] Oral communication by the Iznik Museum Director Mr. Kemal Keresteci.

[17] Diameter of each: 0.22 m.; height of letters: 0.02 m. Could these medallions come from a baptismal font? Cf. S. J. Saller, *The Memorial* ... (as in note 13 *supra*), II (1941), pl. 47, 1–2. Cf. εὐξάμενος καὶ ἐπιτυχὼν ἀνέστησα in a pagan inscription (Cilicia, a. 307?), *SEG*, 12 (1955), no. 503.

[17a] Dated by A. M. Schneider to the fifth-sixth century. Cf. his *Die römischen und byzantinischen Denkmäler von Iznik-Nicaea* (= *Istanbuler Forschungen*, 16) (1943), 14.

[18] *AJA*, 55 (1951), 351, and "A Processional Cross," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 12 (1954), 279.

rection. Our formula occurs on the two silver plates of the Archaeological Museum at Istanbul found in Stuma near Riha: one of the plates is from the time of Tiberius (578–582),[19] the other, from the beginning of the seventh century;[20] on the peculiar vial of the Walters Art Gallery, found in Ḥama (Syria) and attributed to the sixth century;[21] in an inscription from Ḥerake (Syria), dating from the beginning of the sixth century;[22] and on the threshold of a church near Arsus (region of Antioch), which seems to date from the sixth century.[23] Two variants of the formula appear in Palestine, in the large sense of the term: on a mosaic, recently uncovered on the Mount of Olives and dated to the seventh century,[24] and on a small marble column from Ḥafir el 'Audja in *Palaestina tertia*.[25] Finally, two objects and one inscription exhibit the formula in reverse sequence: the Riha paten (now at Dumbarton Oaks), dating from Justinian's time,[26] the chalice of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, reportedly found at Ḥama and dated by Professor Downey into the sixth century,[27] and the floor mosaic at Scythopolis (sixth century).[27a]

3. Associated with the term "Emperor," the epithet φιλόχριστος (Christ-loving), i.e. good Christian, offers no clue for dating; associated with the name of a commoner (dead or alive), it points to the early period. In literary works, this latter association is frequently attested from the fourth century on;[28] epigraphical evidence is most plentiful over the sixth and seventh centuries. This evidence comes from Sinai itself, where a Christ-loving priest Gerontios asks for God's help and quotes Psalm 112:7;[29] from several mosaics in Palestine: those of Scythopolis, from the sixth century, in one instance from 567, referring to the burials of the Christ-loving Georgia, Lady Maria, and two Christ-loving *comites* respectively,[30] that of Bittīr (sixth-

[19] Ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς κ(αὶ) σωτηρίας Σεργίου κ(αὶ) Ἄννας καὶ ἀναπαύσεως Δομετίου [κ(αὶ)] Ἰωάννου, cf. *IGLS*, 2 (1939), no. 697 and Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 29.

[20] Ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς κ(αὶ) σ[ωτηρία]ς Σεργίου τ[οῦ] ἀργυροπράτου κ(αὶ) ἀναπαύσεως Μαρίας..., *IGLS*, 2 (1939), no. 698.

[21] Ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς καὶ σωτηρίας Μεγάλης .... καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως Ἡλιοδώρου .... Cf. *Early Christian and Byzantine Art, an Exhibition Held at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Organized by the Walters Art Gallery* (1947), no. 397 and pl. LV; *IGLS*, 5 (1959), no. 2035.

[22] [Ἰωάνν]ης Δόμνου ὑπὲρ σωτηρί[ας] | [---] νου ἀδελφοῦ (καὶ) ἀναπαύσ [εως] | [τῶν ἀδ]ελφῶν.... Cf. *IGLS*, 4 (1955), no. 1584.

[23] ....ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας τῶν καρ [ποφο]ρούντων, ἀλλὰ δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως Ἰουλιανοῦ, cf. *IGLS*, 3, 1 (1950), no. 733.

[24] ....ὑπὲρ λύτρου τῶν αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν κ(αὶ) ἀναπαύσεως τῶν αὐτοῦ ἀδελφ(ῶν).... Cf. *SEG*, 17 (1960), no. 786 and, for the date, B. Bagatti in *Studium biblicum Franciscanum*, 6 (1955–1956), 270.

[25] Ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας Γεωργί(ου) Πατρικ(ίου) ἡγουμένου· ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως Ἀναστασίας Ἀλεξάνδρου. Cf. A. Alt, *Die griechischen Inschriften der Palästina tertia westlich der 'Araba* (1921), no. 121. Cf. also *SEG*, 16 (1959), no. 850, a mosaic inscription from Beth Ṣafafa near Jerusalem (Israel), date: sixth century.

[26] Ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως Σεργίας Ἰωάννου κ(αὶ) Θεοδοσίουκ(αὶ) σωτηρίας Μεγάλου κ(αὶ) Νόννου κ(αὶ) τῶν αὐτῶν τέκνων. Cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 20; Ross, *Catalogue*, no. 10 and pls. XI–XIII.

[27] Ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως Χαρουφα κ(αὶ) σωτηρίας Θέκλης.... Cf. G. Downey, as in note 9 *supra, passim*; *IGLS*, 5 (1959), no. 2044; Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 80.

[27a] ...ὑπὲ[ρ μν]ήμης κ(αὶ)... ἀναπαύσεως Ζωσίμου ἰλλουστρίου κ(αὶ) σωτηρίας... Ἰωάννου, ... cf. G. M. Fitzgerald, *A Sixth Century Monastery at Beth-Shan* (*Scythopolis*) (= *Publications of the Palestine Section of the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania*, IV) (1939), 13.

[28] Not only individuals, but groups (λαός), cities, countries, and churches were φιλόχριστοι. Cf. treatment of epithet in J. Irmscher, "Ἡ φιλόχριστος πόλις (zu *Anthologia Graeca*, XVI, 282)," *Studien zum Neuen Testament und zur Patristik Erich Klostermann zum 90. Geburtstag dargebracht* (1961), 323–330. Cf. also B. Bagatti, as in note 24 *supra*, 247–248.

[29] ....σοὶ κ(ύρι)ε βοήθισό(ν) ... Γερόντιον τὸν φυλόχρ(ιστον) πρεσβ(ύτερον).... Now a (reused) lintel over the (former) door of the (former) refectory· Cf. *Revue biblique*, 6 (1897), 115; O. Tafrali, *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'épigraphie byzantines* (1913), no. 10, p. 84; L. Jalabert, *DACL*, 3 (1913), 1735 (= no. 56); 1751; H. L. Rabino, "Le monastère...," *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte*, 19 (1935), no. 53, p. 87; *idem, Le monastère*,... 2nd ed. (1938), no. 139, p. 57. I date the inscription to the late sixth or early seventh century. For a seventh-century icon, cf. A. and M. Soteriou, Εἰκόνες... I (1956), pl. 8; II, p. 23.

[30] ...κατέθεικα τὴν φιλόχ(ριστό)ν μου ἀδελφὴν Γεωργίαν...,Χ(ριστ)ὲ... ἐλέησον τὴν φιλώχ(ριστο)ν κυρᾶν Μαρίαν..., Πέτρου κ(αὶ) Ἀναστασίου φιλοχρίστων κομίτων..., *SEG*, 8 (1937), no. 40, and G. M. Fitzgerald, *A Sixth Century Monastery* ... (as in note 27[a] *supra*), 13–14 and pls. XX–XXI.

seventh century), mentioning the construction of a building for the succor of Alypius the Christ-loving,[31] and that of the Mount of Olives (seventh century), where Symeon the Christ-loving declares that he has built "the present house of prayer" for the repose of his Christ-loving brother Dometios.[32] Syria offers one example: "a certain John, a Christ-loving man" transformed an (abandoned?) pagan temple into a church at Zor'ah in 515.[33] Finally, an epitaph from the area of Tyana commemorates the Christ-loving soldier Theodore.[34]

4. A Christian lady by the name of Dometia (Δομετία) is mentioned on the famous fifth-century sepulchral inscription at Ḥass (Syria).[35] Other Dometiae known to me from tombstones in Asia Minor were pagan.[36] A Christian Domitia (Δομητία) appears on an undated tombstone from Herment (Egypt).[37] As for the masculine form of the name, Δομέτιος, it was borne by the sixth-century author of the *kontakion* on John the Baptist.[37a]

Other Dometii are very well attested in Christian inscriptions from Syria and Palestine,[38] while material from other areas is somewhat less plentiful.[39] This may perhaps be explained by the fact that Dometios, a saint and martyr who is localized by his legend in Cyrrhus (Northern Syria) was widely revered in the sixth century, in Antioch, Edessa, and Jerusalem.[40] Influenced by the popularity of this cult, some Syrian

[31] Ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας (καὶ) ἀντιλήμψεως Ἀλυπίου τοῦ φιλ(ο)χρ(ίστου)..., *SEG*, 8 (1937), no. 230; photographs: C. M. Kaufmann, *Handbuch der christlichen Epigraphik* (1917), p. 408, and *Revue Biblique*, N.S., 7 (1910), 257 and pl. 1.

[32] ....Συμεὼν ὁ φιλόχρ(ι)στος.... ὑπὲρ.... ἀναπαύσεως... Δομετίου φιλοχρίστου. For references, cf. note 24 *supra*. A mosaic inscription from Qalonia, now in the west cloister of the Palestine Museum, Jerusalem (Jordan), was executed ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας.... Θεοδόρας κ(αὶ) Μαρίας τõν φιλοχρ(ίστων). It's date is fifth-sixth century.

[33] *CIG*, IV, no. 8627 and W. K. Prentice, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions* (= *Publ. of An American Archaeological Exped. to Syria, 1899 to 1900*, III [1908]), no. 437a.

[34] Μνήμη τῷ (?) φιλοχρίστῳ (?) στρατιώτῳ (?) Θεοδώρου..., *CIG*, IV, no. 9420. No date, but probably not later than the sixth century, because of the opening word μνήμη. Neither the formula ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας καὶ ἀναπαύσεως nor the epithet φιλόχριστος occur in G. Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d'Égypte* (1907) (over 800 numbers). The formula may be absent because most of Lefebvre's material consists of sepulchral, rather than votive, inscriptions. The absence of the epithet is more astonishing; perhaps this epithet was not popular in Egypt. The silence of the *Recueil* creates a presumption against the Egyptian origin of our cross.

[35] *IGLS*, 4 (1955), no. 1522; cf. also Kaufmann, *Handbuch*... (as in note 31 *supra*), p. 207.

[36] Cf. *MAMA*, I (1928), no. 129; VII (1958), no. 52 and pl. 3 (fourth century?); R. Heberdey-A. Wilhelm, *Reisen in Kilikien* (= *Denkschriften der Kaiserl. Akad. der Wiss. Wien*, 44 [1896]), no. 33, p. 13 (Mopsuestia).

[37] Lefebvre, *Recueil* (as in note 34 *supra*), no. 433.

[37a] Cf. H. G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (1959), 429.

[38] *IGLS*, 2 (1939), no. 659 (fifth century?); no. 297 (and Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 29) (578–582); *IGLS*, 4 (1955), no. 1691 and 1693 (both late Justinianic); Alt, *Die griechischen Inschriften der Palästina tertia* ... (as in note 25 *supra*), no. 6 (610? cf. against it, *ibidem*, p. 14, note 3); *SEG*, 17 (1960), no. 786 (seventh century).

[39] Grégoire, *Recueil* ... *Asie Mineure* (as in note 14 *supra*), no. 31 (Aidınlık, Hellespont, fourth-fifth century); *MAMA*, 4 (1933), no. 221 (Senirgent, Apollonia, Galatia, latter half of the third century, already Christian); B. Meyer-Plath and A. M. Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel* ..., 2 (1943) [= *Denkmäler antiker Architektur*, 8], no. 26, p. 130 (Constantinople, land walls, sixth-seventh century?). For Dometii "I" and "II," bishops of Nicopolis (near Preveza) of Epirus (sixth century) and their inscriptions, cf. *e.g.* E. Kitzinger in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 6 (1951), 86–92; 100–101 and fig. 18.

[40] Cf. H. Delehaye, *Les origines du culte des martyrs*, 2nd ed. (1933), 192, 206, 213; B. Bagatti, as in note 24 *supra*, 248; P. Peeters, "Dometios le martyr et Dometios le médecin," *Analecta Bollandiana*, 57 (1939), 72–104. For an epigraphical mention of St. Dometius, cf. *IGLS*, 2 (1939), no. 589 (date: 521). In all probability, his *Vita* was written at the beginning of the sixth century: cf. H. G. Beck, *Kirche* ... (as in note 37a *supra*), 402. By about 500, the Saints Maximos and Dometios were celebrated in the Baramûs monastery of Egypt (Scetis). According to their legend, they were "Romans" and sons of Valentinian I. However, the actual persons who provided the legend with their names (and with some features of their lives) had most probably come from Syria or north Palestine, regions where their miracles were wrought. Cf. H. G. Evelyn White (W. Hauser, *ed.*), *The Monasteries of the Wâdi 'n Natrûn*, II (1932), especially pp. 100–103.

and Palestinian parents may have given the name of Dometia to their daughters.[41]

The shape of the Sinai cross (figure 1), the tear drop serifs at its ends, and the six eyelets for *perpendulia* on its lateral arms have their counterparts in the cross of the sixth-century *opus sectile* panel on the west wall of the Church of St. Sophia at Istanbul[42] (cf. figure 9). The two candleholders of our cross are paralleled on a cross depicted in the Catacomb of Pontianus (cf. figure 10) and dated in the sixth or seventh century.[43]

The closest parallels to the letter forms of the Sinai cross (figures 11 and 12) appear on objects coming from Syria and Palestine: the sixth-century cross of Cyriacus found near Ḥama and now owned by the Walters Art Gallery of Baltimore[44] (cf. figure 15); the silver plate dating from Justin II's reign (565–578), presumably found in Latakia and now in the Mallon Collection, New York[45] (cf. figure 13), and on several sixth-century *ampullae* from the Holy Land, well represented by the Dumbarton Oaks *ampulla*[46] (cf. figure 14).

Somewhat less similar are the letters on the "Chalice of St. Anne," dating from the latter part of Justinian's reign, presumably found at Qara (between Ḥama and Aleppo) and now at the Convent of St. Anne, Jerusalem;[47] on a second bronze cross from Sinai (of unknown provenance; now in the former refectory) with the bust of Christ (in the center of the inscribed side) and a figure of the standing Virgin (on the reverse side)[48] (cf. figure 16); on the silver plate of the Walters Art Gallery, found in Ḥama and

[41] The name Proclos occurring in our inscription points to the early Byzantine period. It is attested in the sixth century: as an example, cf. Procopius, *Hist. arcana*, 6: 13; 9: 41 for Justin I's Quaestor Proclos. The name allows of no conclusions as to the provenance of the cross.

[42] Cf. Paul A. Underwood in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 14 (1960), 206–207 and figs. 2 and 3.

[43] Cf. J. Wilpert, *Die Malereien der Katakomben Roms* ... (1903), 497 and pl. 259. The eight-pointed stars of the vault of Heaven on the Sinai cross have already been juxtaposed with the stars occurring on the *ampullae* of Monza (cf. Professor Weitzmann's part of the present note, p. 386 and note 5). In addition they may be compared with the eight-pointed stars in the vault of Heaven of the David and Goliath plate at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 58 [date: 610–641]); the eight-pointed planets on panel 15 (Second Coming, as shown by E. H. Kantorowicz in *Art Bulletin*, 26 [1944], 223–228) of the door of Santa Sabina in Rome (*ca.* 430; the best reproduction of the panel is still that by J. Wiegand, *Das altchristliche Hauptportal an der Kirche der hl. Sabina* ... [1900], pl. XVIII); the star (?) in the Dumbarton Oaks medallion with an Emperor, found in Syria and dated into the sixth century (cf. *The Dumbarton Oaks Collection ... Handbook* [1955], no. 172); and the Bethlehem stars in the three scenes depicting the Adoration of the Magi: on a British Museum ivory diptych (cf. *e.g.* W. F. Volbach, *Early Christian Art* [1962], pl. 222), on a Dumbarton Oaks medallion (cf. Volbach, *ibidem*, pl. 248), and on the mosaic of San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna (cf. Volbach, *ibidem*, pl. 153). All three date from the sixth century.

[44] Ch. Diehl, "Un nouveau trésor d'argenterie syrienne," *Syria*, 7 (1926), no. 14 and pl. XXII, 2; *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* ... (as in note 21 *supra*), no. 404; *IGLS*, 5 (1959), no. 2039.

[45] Cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 25.

[46] Cf. Ross, *Catalogue*..., no. 87, pl. XLVIII. Compare the form of Ξ on our cross (cf. fig. 12) with the Ξ's of the three previous examples. Cf. also the Ξ's of the inscription from Gerasa dated to the sixth century by C. B. Welles, *Gerasa ... Inscriptions* (1938), no. 339 and pl. CXXXIII; in the epitaph of Isaac, Exarch of Ravenna (625–643), on the lid of his sarcophagus in San Vitale, Ravenna (for a photograph, see e.g. W. F. Volbach, *Early Christian Art* [1962], pl. 179); in the Dometius inscription from the land walls of Constantinople (cf. note 39 *supra*); and in the inscription no. 3896 (date: fifth century? Cf. L. Robert in *Revue des études grecques*, 71 [1958], 187, no. 44, with bibliography, of the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul. Such Ξ's are attested in inscriptions earlier than our cross (e.g., Polycharmos' inscription from the Stobi Synagogue, date: not later than the third century; cf. E. Kitzinger in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 3 [1946], 143 with note 282 and fig. 202); the point is, however, that they do frequently occur in the sixth century.

[47] Cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 18.

[48] Upright bar: + Λεόντιος κ(αὶ) Σάβας εὐχαριστοῦντες transverse bar: τῇ ‛Αγίᾳ Τριάδι προσήνεκαν Cf. Amantos, Σιναϊτικὰ μνημεῖα... (as on p. 391 *supra* in *Bibliography* to our inscription), 47, note 2; H. L. Rabino, *Le monastère*, ... 2nd ed. (1938), no. 134, p. 110. This cross could date from the sixth or seventh century and could originally have been dedicated to the Monastery of The Trinity in Palestine. For the bust of Christ, cf. the Christs on the reliquary in the Museo Sacro Vaticano (cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 47); on Justin II's cross in the Treasury of St. Peter's; and on the Hermitage reliquary, Leningrad (cf. Dodd, *ibidem*, no. 17a); all these objects date from the sixth century.

tentatively dated to the seventh century;[49] on the fifth-sixth century lid of Bishop Besammon's book container from Luxor, now at the Cairo Museum;[50] and on the handles of the silver chalice of Ardaburius dated into the late fifth century, reportedly coming from Syria and now belonging to Dumbarton Oaks.[51] The silver paten at the Cleveland Museum, of uncertain provenance and date, but certainly coming from Syria, and possibly attributable to the sixth century,[52] differs from our cross in several details of its lettering; its M's, however, are identical with the M's of our inscription.

Thus, forms of letters very close to those of the Sinai cross occur on several metal objects[53] dated, sometimes with certainty, into the sixth century. Most of these objects were found in Syria or Palestine, or have been assigned to these parts of the Empire.[54] This is not proof that our cross was made in these same parts in the sixth century; but it is some intimation of it, especially since the previous study of the formulae of our inscription has often led us to the same places and the same time.[55]

In sum, Theodora, the donor of our cross, flourished in the sixth century, but we do not know who she was or where she lived. I imagine that she was the daughter of Proclus and Dometia, that she was a well-to-do—but not too literate—[56] Syrian or Palestinian lady, and that she had ordered her cross, to be made especially for Sinai, in some important center of one of these lands.

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[49] Cf. Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, no. 98.

[50] Cf. J. Strzygowski, *Koptische Kunst* (= *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*, 2 [1904]), no. 7203 and fig. 418. Strzygowski's dating into the fifth or sixth century seems more plausible than Maspéro's (seventh-eighth century).

[51] Cf. Ross, *Catalogue*..., no. 5 and pl. IV.

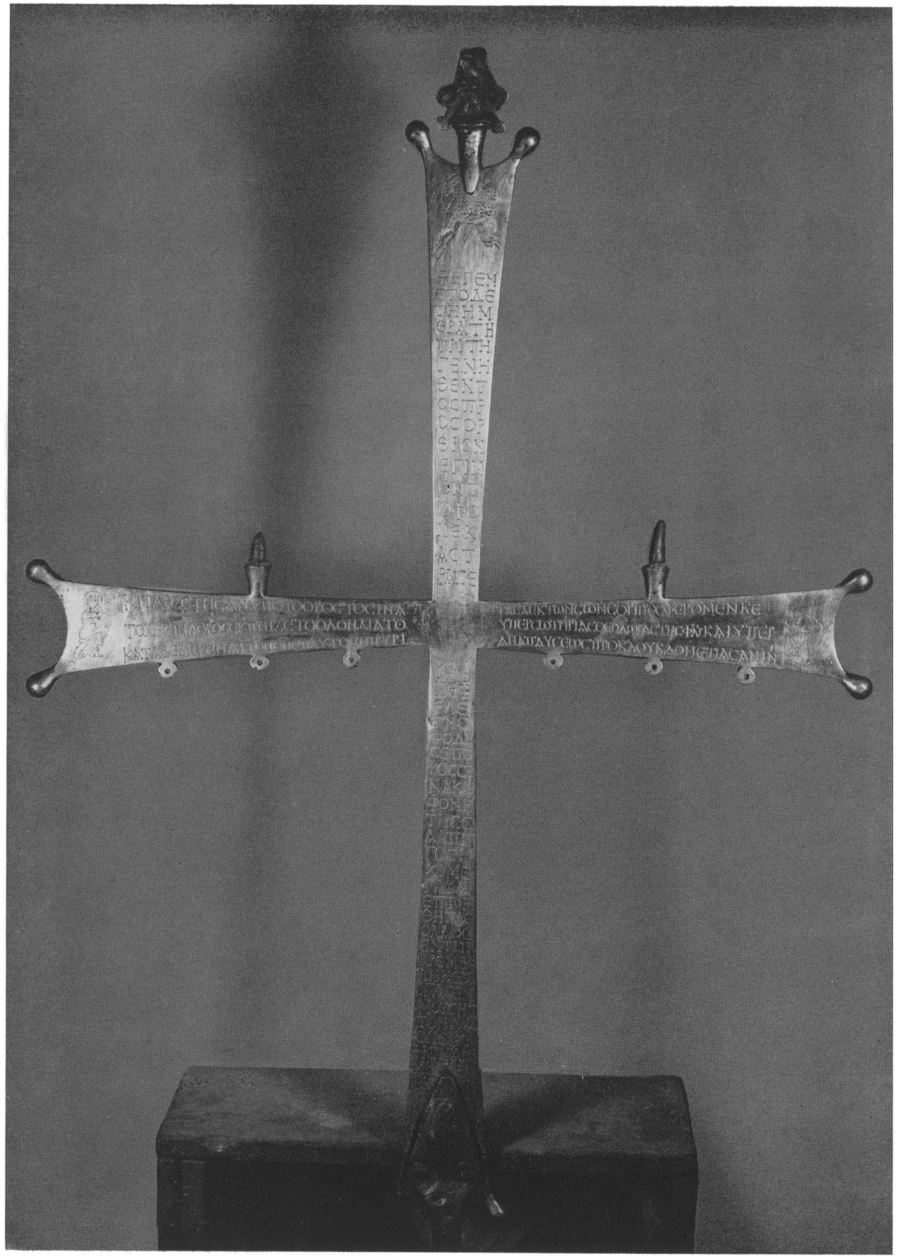
[52] Cf. L. Bréhier, "Un trésor d'argenterie ancienne au Musée de Cleveland," *Syria*, 28 (1951), 257–264 (date: fourth century; destination: Resafa; made in: Antioch), and the justified objections to all these conclusions in G. Downey, "The Dating of the Syrian Liturgical Silver Treasure in the Cleveland Museum," *Art Bulletin*, 35 (1953), 143–145 (date: fourth to seventh century, possibly sixth-seventh; destination: χωρίῳ Βενμισώνᾳ; H. Seyrig in G. Tschalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord*, III [1958], 39 reads χωρίου Βηθμισονα).

[53] I have adduced only those metal objects that, like our cross, are inscribed with letters in thin, single outline. Thus, I have ignored a whole class of objects, exemplified by the "Tyler Chalice" (cf. p. 394 and note 11 *supra*), that have letters with more body, permitting some gradation; other objects, also omitted here, like the Luxor Cross (cf. Strzygowski, *Koptische Kunst*... [as in note 50 *supra*], no. 7201 and pl. XXXIX), present letters in double outline. Within this latter class of objects, the Metropolitan Museum Chalice and Cross (cf. pp. 393–395 and notes 9, 18, and 27 *supra*), both of which exhibit the same type of lettering, form a group apart. The cross (which would be the largest sixth-century metal cross known thus far: as restored, it measures 1.49 × 0.98 m.) displays one peculiarity: the *trisagion* formula distributed on its four arms must be read in the $2^{1}_{4}3$ sequence, while nearly all other crosses known to me, whether sixth century or later, are arranged in the "normal" $3^{1}_{2}4$ sequence. The exception that comes to mind is the cross *IGLS*, I (1929), no. 211 (collection Marcopoli, Aleppo); by coincidence, it contains the name Κομητᾶς which also appears on the cross of the Metropolitan Museum. Herodotus, another name appearing on the latter cross, must be a rarity in the Christian period. Finally, I have omitted the inscription on the golden cup with personifications of four cities, found in Albania and now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, cf. J. Strzygowski, *Altai-Iran und Völkerwanderung*... (1917), 3–10, figs. 2–5, and pl. II, esp. p. 8 (date: sixth-seventh century [B. Keil]; seventh century [Strzygowski]) and J. J. Rorimer-W. H. Forsyth, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, N.S., 12 (1954), fig. on p. 125. The lettering of this inscription, while generally related to that of our cross, is much more negligent in execution.

[54] Found in Syria does not necessarily mean made in Syria; but neither does it necessarily mean "made in Constantinople." Mrs. Dodd, who states that *Imperial* stamps were applied to silver objects (no matter where found) in the Capital (*Silver Stamps*, 23–35), wisely adds that these objects could have been decorated—and, may we add, inscribed—elsewhere, *e.g.*, in Syria (*ibidem*, 35).

[55] There would be nothing extraordinary in our cross having come from Syria or Palestine in view of the close contacts between Sinai, itself a part of *Palaestina tertia* under Justinian, and these regions. The builder of the Sinai basilica, Stephanos, came from Aila, in *Palaestina tertia*.

[56] Otherwise, she would have chosen an engraver more familiar with the rules of orthography and syntax than the one who executed our inscription. Γνοφόδις (lines 20–22) and μνήσθητι τῷ γράψαντι (lines 47–49) place him (and her) considerably below the standards of sixth-century king's Greek.



1. Bronze Cross



2. Cross, detail of Top

Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Basilica, Forty Martyrs Chapel



3. Cross, detail of Left Arm. Moses Ascending Mount Sinai



4. Cross, detail of Right Arm. Moses Removing His Sandals

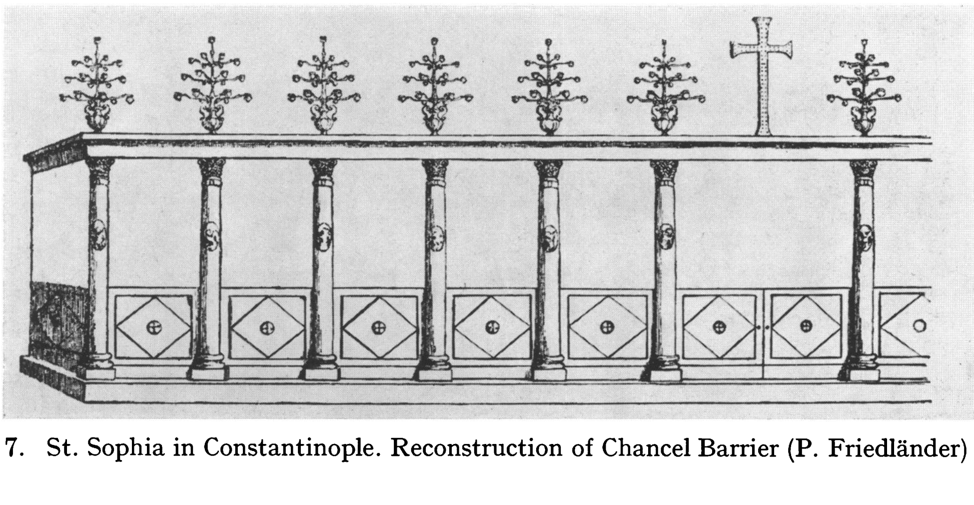
Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Basilica, Forty Martyrs Chapel



5. Vatican Library, Cod. Gr. 746, folio 157r



6. Formerly Izmir (Smyrna), Evangelical School. Octateuch, folio 106v

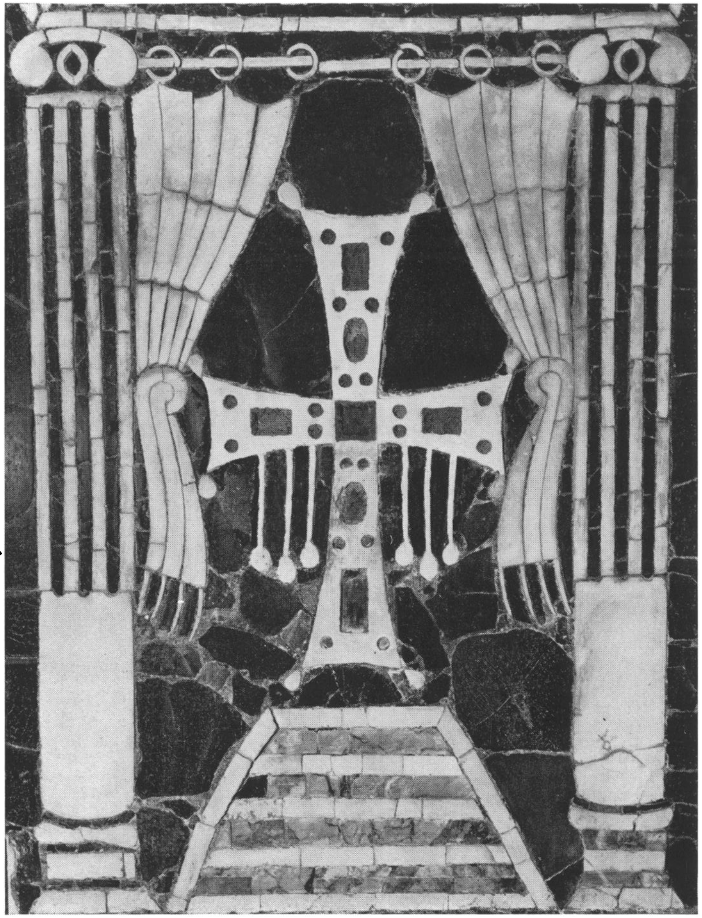


7. St. Sophia in Constantinople. Reconstruction of Chancel Barrier (P. Friedländer)



Medallion A | Medallion B

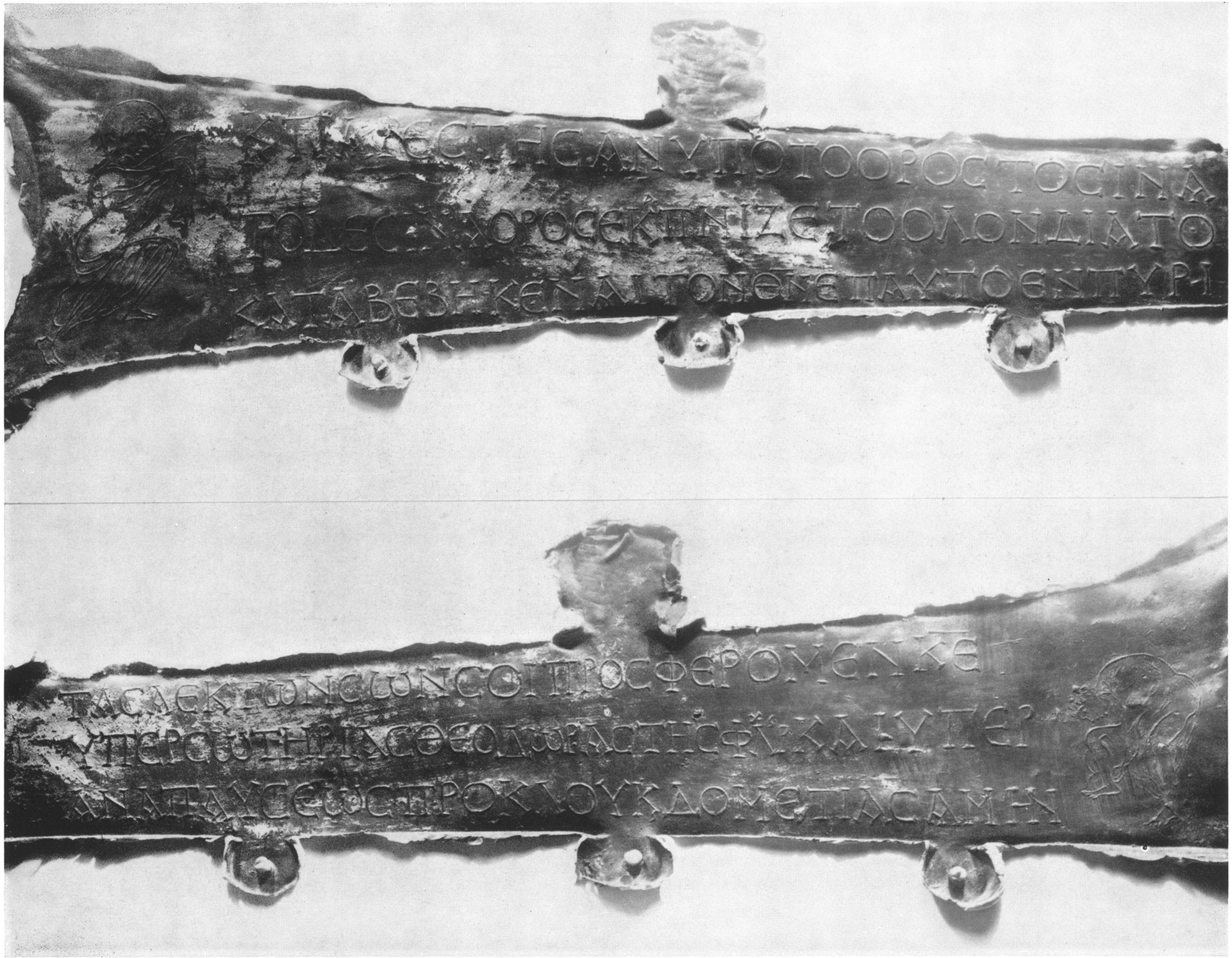
8. Iznik (Nicaea), Museum (Storeroom). Inscription on two Marble Medallions from St. Sophia



9. Constantinople, St. Sophia, West Wall. *Aedicula* with Cross



10. Rome, Catacomb of Pontianus. Painted Cross



11. Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Basilica, Forty Martyrs Chapel. Bronze Cross, Inscription on Lateral Arms. Photograph of Latex Mold



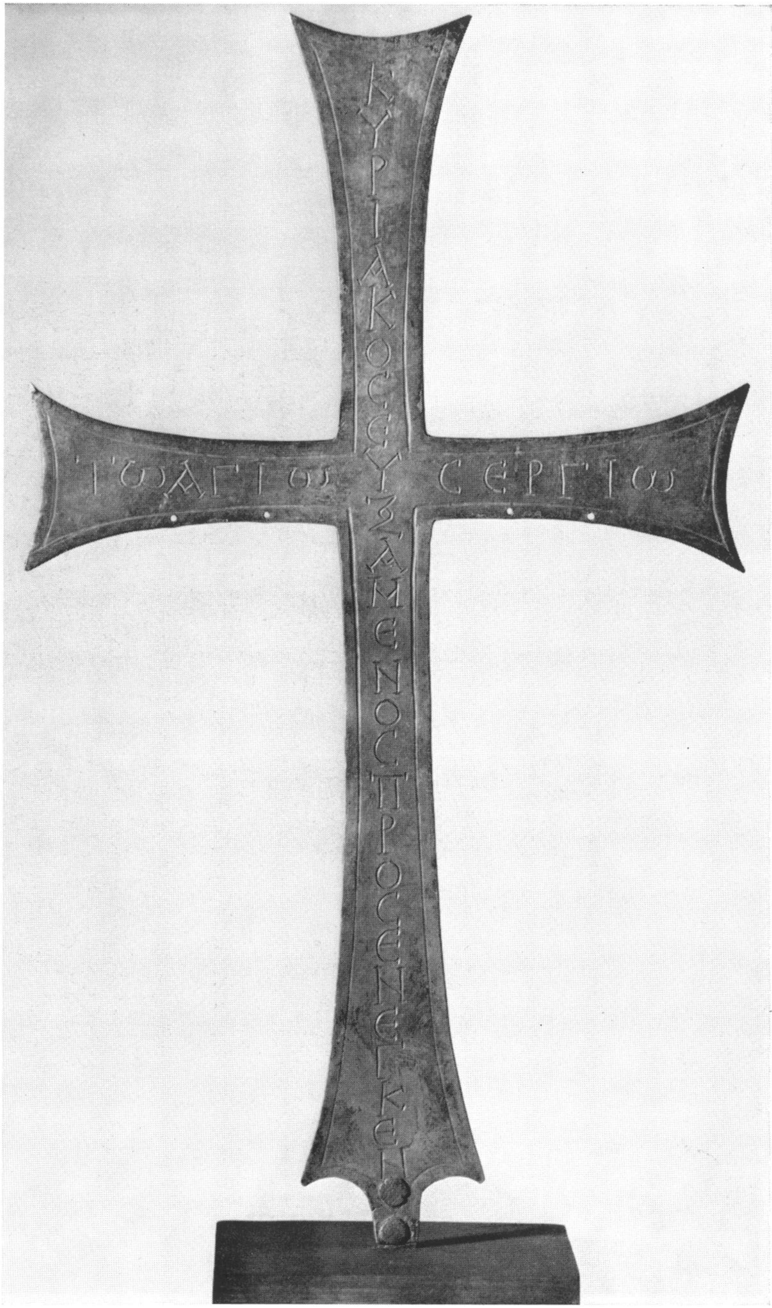
12. Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Basilica, Forty Martyrs Chapel.
Bronze Cross, Fragment of Inscription on Upright Bar, Original Dimensions.
Photograph of Latex Mold



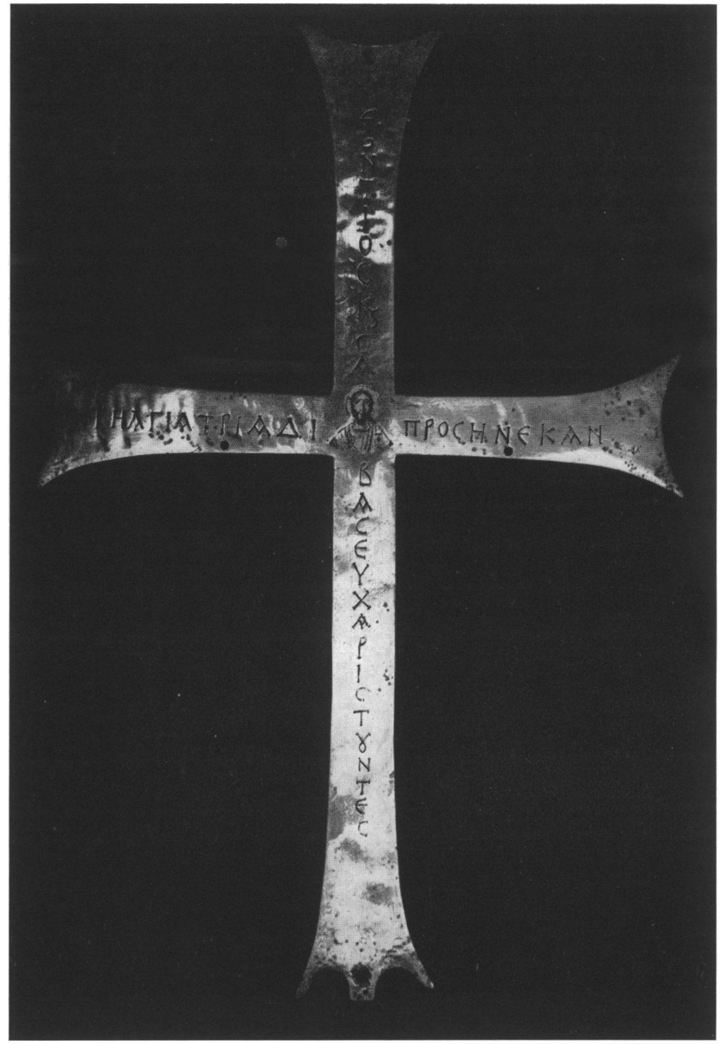
13. New York, Paul Mallon Collection. Silver Plate



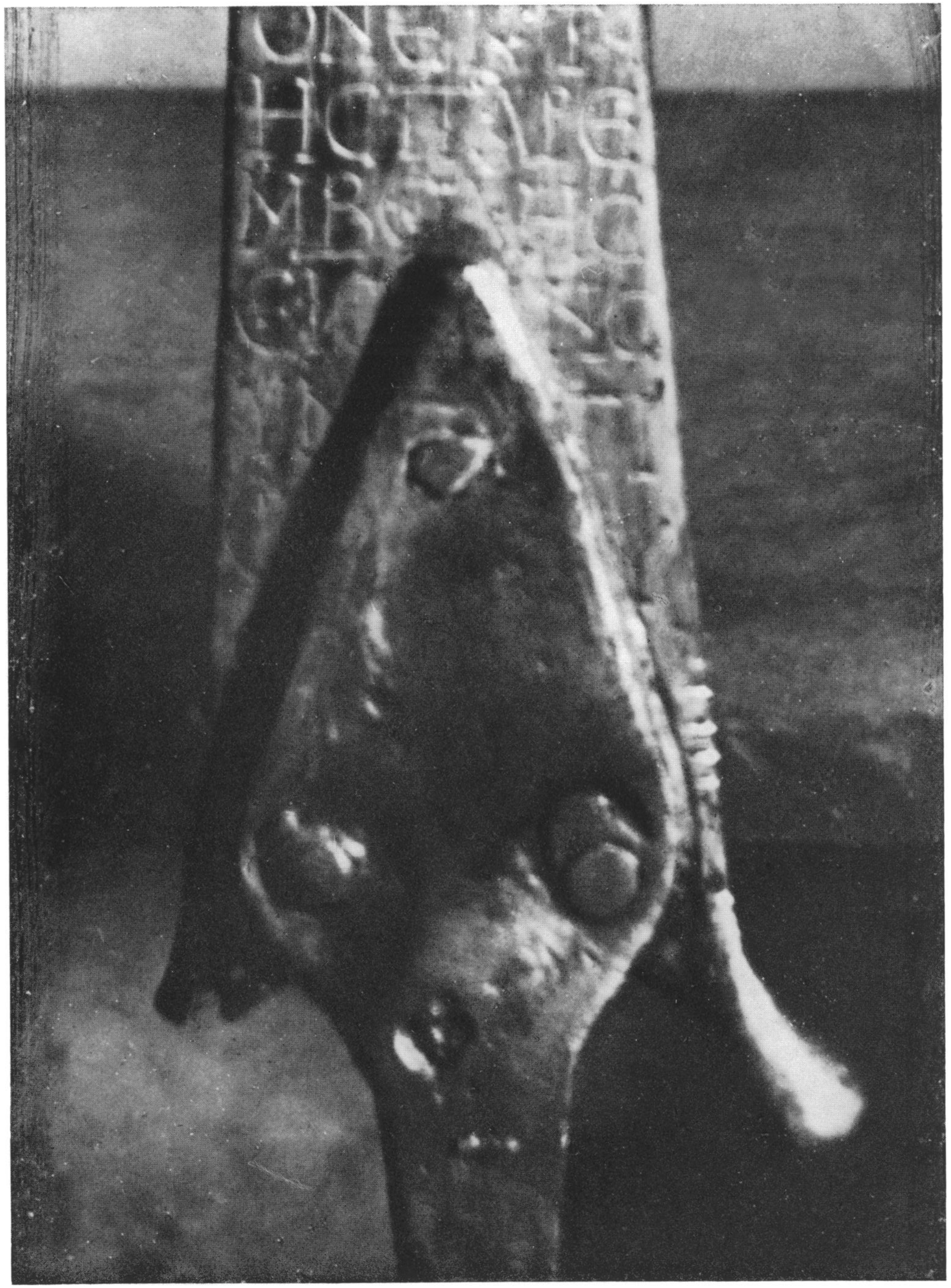
14. Washington, D. C., The Dumbarton Oaks Collection. *Ampulla*



15. Baltimore, The Walters Art Gallery. Silver Cross of Cyriacus



16. Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, former Refectory. Bronze Cross



17. Bronze Cross, lower part of Upright Bar, before removal of Clamp



18. Bronze Cross, lower part of Upright Bar, after removal of Clamp

Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Basilica, Forty Martyrs Chapel